Statement & Resolutions
from the
Concerned Students of Middlebury

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The Concerned Students of Middlebury (formerly Black@Midd) would like to acknowledge that the recent attack on the US capitol was a tragedy that should never have happened. We stand firmly against the fascist and seditious actions that occurred and believe it important to reflect in this moment to consider the following: what type of community do we wish to exist in, on a national scale and at Middlebury. As a result of this introspection, we have deliberated as a body and decided to release a resolution each week aimed at benefiting the Middlebury community, whether in terms of activism, leadership, or reaffirming our shared Middlebury community values.

TL;DR: The Concerned Students of Middlebury (formerly Black@Midd) stands firmly against the fascism and domestic terrorism that was propagated by President Donald J. Trump and his seditionists on January 6th, 2021. We also continue to stand against the racism and systemic oppression that BIPOC individuals endure daily which is a part of what has enabled these domestic terrorists and white supremacists for centuries. The Concerned Students of Middlebury not only call on each of you to take a role in creating a society and community (on any and all scales) that is more equitable and intolerant of oppressive forces but also asks for your support in our endeavors to do so in our Middlebury community. See our recent resolutions here and sign our petition here to voice your support. Your voice matters so continue to make it heard.

Statement from The Concerned Students of Middlebury:

To Our Middlebury Community:

We, the Concerned Students of Middlebury, would like to hope all is well for those reading this; however, given the times we are currently living in, we understand this is likely an over-optimistic sentiment. We do hope you are each taking care of yourself as much as possible.

It has been many months since our initial email to the Middlebury College administration and in this time great progress has occurred in terms of our fostering of a relationship with our administration. In this time, we have made strides in becoming a solidified student organization, with this process being projected to be completed during January of 2021. While the engagement we have taken on with the Middlebury administration has in many ways provided an excellent opportunity for bidirectional discourse and understanding, this engagement simply does not erase the national scale of pain and suffering Black Americans, Indigenous peoples, and people of color have experienced in recent times. A global pandemic continues to ravage our most disenfranchised communities; the "criminal justice system" continues to disenfranchise BIPOC members of our nation; Black people continue to be murdered in the streets by those who are supposed to serve and protect. It is unfortunate to say that not much has changed in this regard.

While we wish we were returning to the public sphere in a time that has improved from the era in which we were conceived as an organization— an era defined by the continued publicized and fetishized pain of Black Americans— we are disappointed to say that this is not the case. Instead, not only have we returned to a time of continued turmoil as it relates to race but we are also confronted with the increasing stabilization of fascist movements into the democratic fabric of the United States.

Make no mistake: the concepts of racism and fascism are intrinsically linked and have been for many decades in the case of the Republic of the United States. The stench of systemic oppression only fuels the flames of fascist uprisings; They are both predicated on maintaining power and promoting subjugation of our most vulnerable populations. These are ideas that have been perpetuated and amplified by the current sitting President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, for the last four years and we are all now reaping the results of what has been sown by not only him but also his enablers and supporters. It is important now more than ever we reject this and actively play a role in combating these behaviors. These are the very ideals that our organization stands firmly against and we are hoping that our Middlebury community does as well. This fascism may have found a home in the United States of America, today but it does not have a place in the United States of America we wish to cultivate and see prosper in the future.

Let us be abundantly clear: **white supremacy, domestic terrorism, sedition to keep an attempted despot in power, the perversion of the law to ensure the self-determined elite maintain control, and any and all structures contributing to these efforts, all stand in direct contrast to our mission, not only as an organization but as BIPOC individuals and allies**. They all also highlight the simple fact that elections have consequences for all of us. We are seeing the results of not only the 2016 election, but every election preceding it that allowed for the continued cultivation and nourishing of White nationalist sentiments and domestic terrorism in the United States. Holding legislators accountable for their choices is one of the first steps in the process of combating this oppression. The time has come for us to organize as people in order to vote for individuals who represent us and our values. If we don't see them, it's our job to be the individuals to fill that void. Grassroots movements necessitate all of our participation and building a nation where all people are truly equal calls for the election of people who will actively advocate for these values.

The society we live in today needs tangible change. This need for action transcends the Middlebury community that we are direct members of for four years and requires us each to take an active role in creating the change we want to see in the outside world as well. We need people who are willing to not only mobilize for awareness but to also call truth to power and ensure change is made, both in and out of elected offices. Let us each never lose sight of that important truth and recall it every day at Middlebury and beyond when we have opportunities to make positive change in the world.

With all of this taken into consideration, this mission must begin at home. Our college experiences are incredibly formative and, now more than ever, our work as the Concerned Students of Middlebury must work to ensure we all have the resources we need to begin cultivating the values we wish to take with us into the world. While we, the Concerned Students of Middlebury, have done a great deal of work behind closed doors to reach this goal, we recognize that our online absence and thus seeming irreverence towards the issues we all currently face does little to benefit our historically underrepresented and unseen communities. For that, we apologize and pledge to do better. As we have taken time to reflect on this, we have drafted several resolutions that specifically aim to address the issues we have seen in the Middlebury microcosm of the nation. We will be releasing one resolution per week for the duration of J-Term. All resolutions can be found both on this document and in this folder as they are released and this Google Form will serve as the petition for each resolution. All of the above can also be found on the Concerned Students of Middlebury Instagram account.

We refuse to be inactionable during this time, and while we are limited in some of our ability, we must do whatever we can to create the community we all need at Middlebury and can work towards together. As we alluded to earlier, we each have a great deal of power and voice, both individually and together. If you are interested in seeing any of these implemented or simply just looking to voice your support, please join our movement by signing our petitions.

In solidarity,
The Concerned Students of Middlebury Executive Board

Appendix of Recent Resolutions:

I. **CSM Resolution 1: Recent Acts of Sedition and Domestic Terrorism & A Call to Action**
The Concerned Students of Middlebury make a formal statement denouncing the recent acts of sedition and domestic terrorism that was carried out on January 6th, 2021 at the US Capitol. Additionally, we call on our elected officials to prosecute all individuals involved in the planning, rallying, and coordination of this attack; call on elected officials and law enforcement to explain the disparity between the treatment of seditionists on January 6th, 2021 and the Black Lives Matter Protestors in the Summer of 2020 by law enforcement; call on peer organizations and community members to join us in this call to action; call on our institution to invest in democratic processes, student activism, and community organizing; call on our institution to show some form of consequence for attempted insurrectionists who have a tie to Middlebury College.

CSM Resolution 1: Recent Acts of Sedition and Domestic Terrorism & A Call to Action

Author(s): Myles C. Maxie, *Co-President*

Please allow consideration to be given to the following events that occurred in recent weeks:

I. The current sitting President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, and his surrogates have been propagating the legally baseless claim of a fraudulent election since his electoral defeat in November 2020 [1]. This has taken place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

II. The current sitting President of the United States, Donald J. Trump has continued to endorse, promote, and encourage disorder during January 6th demonstrations for weeks prior to the demonstrations occurring, stating in a December 19th tweet: "Be there, will be wild"[2].

III. A member of the Red-State Secession Facebook group stated the following via Facebook on Tuesday, January 5th, 2021:

> "If you are not prepared to use force to defend civilization, then be prepared to accept barbarism".

Multiple respondents to said post replied with pictures of weapons that they indicated they had the intention of bringing to the next day's events[2].

IV. The President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, his son, Donald Trump Jr., and personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, all attended and spoke at a January 6th rally of over one-thousand participants, during which all three individuals encouraged largely maskless participants to show allegiance to the President by protesting against the election results during the Congressional certification process.[3]

V. The President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, indicated to participants of the said rally: "You'll never take back our country with weakness. You have to show strength."[3] and encouraged his supporters to "walk down to the Capitol", presumably to show this strength [4].

VI. The President's son, Donald Trump Jr., stated during the same rally event, "we're coming for you" in reference to members of Congress who may challenge the baseless election fraud claims, which denotes some form of retaliatory action taking place [4].

VII. The purpose of going to the U.S. Capitol was predicated on at a minimum disrupting and possibly fighting against the ceremonial counting of electoral votes that served only the purpose of reaffirming the victory of the President-elect Joseph R. Biden and Vice President-elect (and sitting US Senator present on Capitol Hill) Kamala D. Harris. This would be accomplished by the following, as President Donald J. Trump indicated in his speech: "going to the Capitol and we're going to try and give… our Republicans, the weak ones… the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country." [5]

VIII. Largely maskless rally participants arrived at the Capitol and engaged in multiple altercations with law enforcement officers before forcing themselves through barricades and destroying property (windows) to enter the Capitol. This was against the directive of law enforcement present. As they trespassed in the Capitol, multiple participants chanted "Stop the steal!" as the joint session of Congress was convened to count the electoral votes. Meanwhile, other rally participants descended on law enforcement officers within the building in group form, outnumbering them dramatically and thus posing a threat [5]. During this time, Congressional members were forced to evacuate and thus abandon the process of counting electoral votes to reaffirm the democratic process, accomplishing the goal of stopping the "steal" as rally participants demanded. A total of five people died as a direct result of the time within the Capitol.

IX. The largely maskless rally participants broke into various offices, in which they were not supervised, nor welcome, and potentially had access to non-public government information[6].

X. The last time the US Capitol was broken into and vandalized by a group was in the year 1814 when the British attacked governmental buildings in the nation's capital during the war of 1812 [7]. An attack of this stature has never been conducted by citizens of the United States.

Please also allow consideration to be given to the following definitions and statutes:

XI. The definition of riot is the following:

> "A violent public disorder; specifically: a tumultuous disturbance of the public peace by three or more persons assembled together and acting with a common intent" [8]

Therefore, based on this definition individuals conducting themselves in this form would be considered rioters.

XII. The definition of vandalism is the following:

> "Destroying, injuring, defacing, or damaging property or real property" [9]

Therefore, based on this definition, an individual committing these actions would also be classified as a vandal.

XIII. Sedition is considered to be the following by 18 US Code §2384:

> "If two or more persons in any State or Territory, or in any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, conspire to overthrow, put down, or to destroy by force the Government of the United States, or to levy war against them, or to oppose by force the authority thereof, or by force to prevent, hinder, or delay the execution of any law of the United States, or by force to seize, take, or possess any property of the United States contrary to the authority thereof, they shall each be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both." [10]

Therefore, based on this statute, any individual involved in the knowing construction of an event that accomplishes any of the aforementioned components would be considered a seditionist.

XIV. Domestic terrorism is defined as the following by the USA PATRIOT Act:

> "(5) the term 'domestic terrorism' means activities that—
>
> > "(A) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State;
> >
> > "(B) appear to be intended—
> >
> > > "(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;
> > >
> > > "(ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or
> > >
> > > "(iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
> >
> > "(C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.". [11]

Therefore, based on this definition, any individuals conducting themselves in such a way would definitionally be considered domestic terrorists.

Given the aforementioned, it is resolved by the Concerned Students of Middlebury that:

I. The following is true of the January 6th assault on the nation's Capitol:

- **A.** Based on the details of what occurred on the date of January 6th, 2021 in Washington D.C. and the definitions provided above, the event in question outside of the Capitol is henceforth considered a riot.
- **B.** Based on the presence of weapons at the riot and the violence that was inflicted on law enforcement, in conjunction with the vandalism that occurred, this constitutes an attack.
- **C.** All individuals involved in the planning and coordinating the attack on the democratic process of counting the electoral votes cast committed an act of sedition, per the statutes and definitions of the terms and events that occurred.
- **D.** All individuals involved in the carrying out of the seditious actions committed on January 6th, 2021, committed an act of domestic terrorism as per the statutes and definitions given above, specifically as it relates to USA PATRIOT ACT excerpts A, B(II), and C.

II. As student leaders, it is our responsibility to:

- **A.** Denounce these acts of vandalism, violence, sedition, and domestic terrorism, from all parties involved, as they are abhorrent, improper, illegal, do not represent us nor our values, and should not represent the views of any individual in our community or society.
- **B.** Call upon our elected officials, to prosecute all individuals involved in this attack, regardless of status, title, or position, to the fullest extent of the law.

C. Call upon our elected officials and the law enforcement agencies present on January 6th, 2021 in Washington D.C. to find answers to the question of why there exists a disparity between the way in which seditious rioters, vandals, and domestic terrorists were treated by law enforcement and the way in which Black Lives Matter protestors were treated during the protests occurring in the Summer of 2020 (as well as the way Black Americans are treated by police daily, resulting in their consistent brutalization and murder).

D. Call upon our peer organizations to do the same as equality and reverence for the law are values that are assumed to be shared amongst us all.

E. Call upon our community as a whole to do the same to stand united against the fascism that has attempted to take root in our democratic system.

III. As students, we find it imperative to recommend to our institution to:

A. Invest in additional (non-partisan) programming and operations that emphasize the democratic processes and institutions that protect us from fascism and enable us to participate in mobilization/community organizing.

- **i.** Provide a clear and accessible log of how this money is invested, as well as other college monies.

B. Support student involvement in activism and civic engagement.

- **i.** Allocate $20,000 an academic school year of the institution's budget towards campus-community member initiatives that fulfill this mission.
- **ii.** Designate an ad-hoc body composed of students, staff, and faculty that accomplishes this mission. Students should be sourced from a diverse array of student leaders, from clusters of interest (specifically MILC and the Politics and Activism cluster, as well as any other bodies deemed to be relevant).
- **iii.** Hold a town hall meeting with student activists to understand more regarding what is not being provided in terms of support and what else is being asked for.

C. Join the call of *The Middlebury Campus*[12] and Middlebury College to rescind the honorary degree from the College awarded to Rudy Giuliani for his role in the recent violent insurrection attempt. We also encourage other institutions to do so as well for all involved in this insurrection attempt.

Cordially,
The Concerned Students of Middlebury